

POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS BULLETIN

THE CLINICAL CENTER

Medical Administrative Series

M90-2 (rev.)

4 October 2000

MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

SUBJECT: Measles Immunization

1. Explanation of Material Transmitted: This issuance sets forth the Clinical Center policy pertaining to the immunization of workers in the Clinical Center against measles. The policy statement was reviewed by the Medical Executive Committee on 3 October 2000 and approved with minor changes, including the year of birth before which individuals are assumed to have contracted the natural disease and to have acquired lifelong immunity (now 1950).
2. Material Superseded: MAS No. M90-2 (rev.), dated 15 July 1997
3. Filing Instructions: "Other" Section

Remove: No. M90-2 (rev.), dated 15 July 1997

Insert: No. M90-2 (rev.), dated 4 October 2000

DISTRIBUTION

Physicians, Dentists and Other Practitioners Participating in
Patient Care

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SUBJECT: Measles Immunization

PURPOSE

To set forth the Clinical Center's policy regarding the immunization of workers against measles.

BACKGROUND

Measles (rubeola), a highly contagious viral disease of man, is spread by droplets from the upper respiratory tract of an infected individual. It is generally a benign disease, but complications such as pneumonia or middle ear infections may be seen. Encephalitis occurs rarely (0.1% of infections), and may cause serious central nervous system impairment or death.

At the Clinical Center, individuals born before 1950 are assumed to have contracted the natural disease and to have acquired lifelong immunity. Measles vaccines have been used to immunize children against measles since 1963. However, recent studies have shown that persons immunized before 1980 may be insufficiently protected.

POLICY

Persons who work in Building 10 must be immunized against measles.

All new Clinical Center employees, contract employees, Institute employees based in Building 10, and NIH employees who have patient contact, must be immunized against measles. All current Clinical Center employees, contract employees, Institute employees based in Building 10, and NIH employees who have patient contact, are strongly urged to be immunized against measles, unless they have measles immunity. Persons are considered immune to measles if they: (1) were born before 1950, (2) have documentation of physician-diagnosed measles, (3) have laboratory evidence of immunity to measles, or (4) have documentation of receiving measles vaccine since 1980. Documentation means a medical record; a parental history of immunization or of measles is not, by itself, adequate documentation.

EXCEPTIONS

The only exceptions to this policy will be for:

1. Pregnancy: Live measles vaccine should not be given to women who are pregnant or who are considering becoming pregnant within the next three months.
2. Allergies: Persons with a history of anaphylactic reaction after eating eggs or receiving neomycin should be immunized only with extreme caution. Persons are not at increased risk if their egg or neomycin allergies are not anaphylactoid, but of lesser severity, such as contact dermatitis.
3. Recent administration of immune globulin: Measles vaccine should not be given for at least six weeks, and preferably for three months, after receiving immune globulin, whole blood, or other blood products containing antibodies.
4. Altered immunocompetence: Replication of vaccine viruses can be enhanced in persons with immune deficiency diseases or immunosuppression. Persons with such conditions or therapies should not be given live measles virus vaccine.

Persons exempted from immunization for one of these four contraindications should have a measles antibody titer drawn and should be evaluated by a physician from the Occupational Medical Service.

PROCEDURE

The Occupational Medical Service will administer vaccine to NIH employees free of charge. Employees who work with pediatric patients will receive the highest priority for vaccination, followed by employees who care for immunosuppressed patients, other patient-care providers, and, finally, non-patient-care employees.

Further information on this subject may be found in the document entitled: "Recommended Policy for Measles Vaccination," available in the CC Hospital Epidemiology Service Office.